

August 30, 2012

Greetings:

The Technology Readiness Tool (TRT) will give Montana schools a convenient way to capture and report on indicators of their technology readiness for the Smarter Balanced Assessments. This open source tool will help the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI), work with schools and districts to ensure readiness when the online assessments are launched by the Smarter Balanced consortium.

The Technology Readiness Tool assesses current capacity and compares that to the technology that will be needed to administer the new online assessments in four areas:

- Computers and other devices
- Ratio of devices to test-takers
- Network and infrastructure
- Personnel (staffing and training)

In May and June of 2012, five Montana districts (Bozeman, Cascade, Ekalaka, Lewistown and Montana City) participated in a pilot program to use the TRT to begin to chart readiness to implement the Smarter Balanced Assessments in 2014-15. OPI would like to invite you to use the TRT as soon as possible over the next two years to help chart your progress.

### Timeline

Fall 2012: Minimum system requirements will be developed by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. Districts will then be able to compare existing resources to those needed for implementation of next-generation assessments.

Fall 2012 - Fall 2014: All Montana school districts will have the opportunity to use the Technology Readiness Tool to determine their readiness to implement next-generation assessments. National "snapshot" dates have been set to update technology readiness data that charts district progress toward implementation of next-generation assessments.

\*Sunday, September 30, 2012

Friday, December 14, 2012

Friday, June 14, 2013

Friday, December 13, 2013

Friday, June 13, 2014

Monday, August 18, 2014

\*This snapshot will be the most critical in terms of allowing OPI to calculate the most accurate amount to propose to the Legislature.

We would like to share with you some of the reasons why it is very important, and beneficial, for your district to add your data to the Technology Readiness Tool.

- Data from the tool will be used to inform conversations with policy makers and legislators at the state level about the need for technology funding.
- Data from the tool can be used to inform budget conversations with your administration and board.
- You will have immediate access to the reports related to your district's readiness by using the tool.
- Using the tool will help you know if you comply with the testing specifications and if you don't it will give you a benchmark to work toward.
- Using the tool will give you an accurate inventory of your computer devices, including the specifications of each. If you already have inventory information, it can easily be uploaded into the tool.
- This is your opportunity to inform decisions that are being made at the state and national level that will directly impact your district's operations.
- Data from the tool can be incorporated into your technology planning documents.
- Using the tool will help you to be better prepared when the assessments become available.
- The participation of all districts, large and small, is critical to ensure the accuracy of the data we are collecting.

Webinars to provide technical assistance and updates on the use of the TRT in Montana will be held.

- - Wednesday, September 5 - 3:00 p.m. Link <http://connect.opi.mt.gov/mttrt1/>
  - Wednesday, September 19 - 3:00 p.m. Link <http://connect.opi.mt.gov/mttrt2/>
  - Wednesday, October 24 - 3:00 p.m. Link <http://connect.opi.mt.gov/mttrt3/>
  - Wednesday, November 14 - 3:00 p.m. Link <http://connect.opi.mt.gov/mttrt4/>

Additional dates will be added as needed. All sessions will be recorded and posted on the OPI Web site for later viewing.

Please consider the critical statewide financial importance of this project particularly in the month of September, and the benefits to your district, before you make a final decision about participating.

More information can be found on the OPI Web site at <http://opi.mt.gov/MontanaCommonCoreStandards> and clicking on the Assessment tab.

If you have questions, please contact the Montana State Readiness Coordinator (SRC). OPI SRC: Colet Bartow, (406) 444-3583, [cbartow@mt.gov](mailto:cbartow@mt.gov).

Sent August 30, 2012 via OPI Bulk E-mail.